



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **JOPLIN FELON CONVICTED AT BENCH TRIAL FOR ILLEGAL FIREARM POSSESSION**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Joplin, Mo., felon was convicted by a federal judge at a bench trial today for illegally possessing firearms.

**Franklin Gordon Tucker**, 52, of Joplin, was found guilty by U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this morning of being a felon in possession of three firearms.

Following the presentation of evidence in **Tucker's** bench trial, Graves said, Judge Dorr found him guilty of the charge contained in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Aug. 27, 2004, in Springfield.

Specifically, **Tucker** was found guilty of being a felon in possession of a Remington 600 bolt-action .243-caliber rifle, a Marlin .22-caliber semi-automatic rifle and a Ruger .45-caliber pistol on Dec. 30, 2002, in Jasper County, Mo. Under federal law, Graves said, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Tucker** has a 1995 criminal felony conviction for possession of a controlled substance.

**Tucker** possessed the firearms in connection with the felony offenses of possessing ephedrine with intent to manufacture a controlled substance, manufacturing methamphetamine, distributing methamphetamine, and the unlawful use of drug paraphernalia, Graves said.

**Tucker** was initially arrested after law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at his residence on Dec. 30, 2002. As a result of the search, the officers located the firearms with more than 100 rounds of ammunition, a machete, methamphetamine, a number of articles of paraphernalia and ingredients and materials used to manufacture methamphetamine, plus \$3,741.

**Tucker** may be subject to a maximum sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison

without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000. His sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael O. Hendrickson. It was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Jasper County Drug Task Force, the Jasper County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Webb City, Mo., Police Department and the Joplin, Mo., Police Department.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
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